

1486. A. 20.

A
S U M M A R Y
OF THE
Life of St. Werburgh.
With an Historical Account
OF THE
Images upon Her SHRINE,
(Now the Episcopal Throne)
In the CHoir of *CHESTER.*

Collected from ancient Chronicles, and old Writers.

By a Citizen of *CHESTER.*

The *Manuscript* being given to the BLUE-COAT-SCHOOL, is published
by the TREASURERS for the Benefit of that CHARITY.

Retulit antiquas ————— *Figuras*

OVID. Met.

CHESTER:

Printed by ELIZ. ADAMS; and Sold by the Bookfellers in
that City. 1749.

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 Life of St. Wulfram.

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INTRODUCTION.

CUSTOM having now made it almost necessary, that a Sort of Preface or Introduction, should precede even the slightest Performance, a few Lines shall therefore premise somewhat concerning the following Pages.

The Chapter of *Chester* having lately begun to beautify their Cathedral, the decayed Decorations on the Episcopal Throne engaged their Attention: This fine Piece of Antiquity had been ornamented with Carving and Statuary, both which had greatly suffered, not by Time, but by Violence: They have therefore endeavoured to repair the one, and to restore the other, so that the little IMAGES which have for so many Centuries guarded, as it were, this ancient Monument, and were so injuriously defaced, are, by a commendable Care, now made whole again.

As the Personages whom These should represent, lived in the early Ages of Christianity, they are but little known to us ; which induced One, who respects Antiquities, to extract from old Writers some Account of them ; this was done in a very few Days, for his own Amusement. He has since been prevailed upon to let his Collections be published for the Information of others, as likewise to contribute a Mite to a very laudable Charity. And as they go to the Press, with these Intentions only, they may therefore hope for a candid Reception.

CHESTER,
July 31, 1749.



The Names of some Authors cited
in these Collections.

Anglia Sacra	Ingham
Bede	Langhorn's Chro-
Bradshaw	nicle
Brompton	Sir Peter Leyseller
Camden	Ireland's Collection
Dugdale	 Ambury
Florence of Wor-	Powell's History of
cester	Wales
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Goscelin	<i>Simeon of Durham</i>
Higden	Speed
Henry <i>of</i> Hunting- don.	<i>Spelman's Councils</i>
	Tyrrell.



A SUMMARY of the
Life of St. WERBURGH, &c.



THE Episcopal Throne, in the Cathedral-Church of *Chester*, allowed to be the Shrine of St. *Werburcha*, to whom the Abbey was dedicated, is a Stone Structure in the antique monumental Stile, of an oblong quadrangular Form, eight Feet and nine Inches in Height, in Length from East to West seven Feet and six Inches; in Breadth from North to South four Feet and eight Inches, ornamented with six Gothic Arches (three Feet and four Inches in Height) two towards the North Front, two towards the South, one at the East End, and the other at the West; above each of these is an Arch, representing a Window, in the same Stile of Architecture.

This Fabrick is decorated with Variety of Carving, and embellished with a Number of Images, about fourteen Inches in
C Height,

Height, in different Habits, beautified with Painting and Gilding : Each of these held in one Hand a Scroll or Label, upon which were inscribed in *Latin*, but in the Old *English* Character, the Names of Kings and Saints of the Royal Line of **MERCIA**. Many of the Labels are broke off, others are so much defaced, that only a Syllable or two can be read.

These Statues are placed in the following Order, if we begin with the Figure at the South-west Angle, fronting the West, and thence proceed over that End, along the North Front, and thence round the East End, towards the Stairs up to the Throne.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Rex CRIEDA. | 16. Rex -----DUS. |
| 2. Rex PENDA. | 17. S ^{ta} -----RGA. |
| 3. Rex WOLPHERUS. | 18. -----US. |
| 4. Rex CEOLREDUS. | 19. ----- |
| 5. ----- | 20. BALDREDUS. |
| 6. Rex OFFA. | 21. MERWALDUS. |
| 7. Rex EGFERTUS. | 22. Rex WIGLAFF. |
| 8. ----- | 23. Rex BERTWULPH. |
| 9. S ^{tus} KENELMUS. | 24. Rex BURGHREDUS. |
| 10. S ^{ta} MILBURGA. | 25. ----- |
| 11. Rex BEORNA. | 26. S ^{ta} -----EDA. |
| 12. Rex COLWLPHUS. | 27. ----- |
| 13. ----- | 28. ----- |
| 14. S ^{ta} -----LDA. | 29. Rex ETHELBERTUS. |
| 15. -----US. | 30. S ^{ta} MILDRI DA. |

Four more Images have been quite cut away, two at the West, and two at the East End.

The

The Personages which were intended to be represented by these Statues, were either her Ancestors, or else most of them nearly related to St. *Werburcha*, who was Daughter of *Wulphere*, King of *Mercia*, by his Queen *Erminilda*. She was (1) in her Infancy (according to the Custom of those Times) betrothed, or married to her Cousin-German *Ceolredus*, afterwards King of *Mercia*; (2) yet notwithstanding her Marriage, she kept herself a Virgin, chaste and inviolate, having been bred by her Mother *Erminilda*, in the Fear of God, and a Contempt of all worldly Vanities, she very early formed a Resolution to dedicate herself to God in a State of Religion and Virginity.

Langhorn's Chronicle.

Goscelinus in vita Sanctæ Werburghæ.

She persisted in this Intention, not only during the Time of Marriage, but after her Husband's Decease, (3) notwithstanding many great Matches were proposed to her: Nor could she be prevailed upon by her Father to alter her Resolution, tho', whilst he lived, he would not suffer her to be professed. (4) But

(1) "Quæ adhuc puellula, nupta Ceolredo, more temporum, virginitatem conservavit illibatam, et post obitum mariti velata est, cum matre Erminilda apud Hely, sub Sancta Etheldreda abbatisa, Erminilda matertera." *Langhorn. Chron.*

(2) Notwithstanding that the concurrent Testimonies of several Authors declare her to have been the Wife of *Ceolredus*, yet the Distance of sixty-six Years between the Times of their Decease, may possibly occasion somewhat of a Doubt: But any thing of that Kind will be easily solved, if we consider that she was a very young Girl (*Puellula*) when she was married to this Prince, who lived to be, at least, a middle-aged Man, as he did not immediately succeed his Father in the Throne of *Mercia*, but had the Kingdom after his Cousin *Kenred*, and enjoyed it eight Years. He died A. D. 716,

and she died A. D. 782. *Sax. Chron.*

(3) *Werbodus* vir magni nominis apud *Wulpherum* regem *Merciorum* ambiebat *Werbungam* in uxorem. *Bradshaw, in vita Sanctæ Werburghæ, L. 1. c. 2.*

(4) "Werburcha post mortem *Wulpheri* patris sui intravit monasterium de *Ely*, cujus sanctitatem cum *Etheldredus* rex *Merciorum*, ejus patruus cognovisset, abductam ex *Ely* principatum monasteriorum sanctimonialium, quæ in ejus regno erant, ei tradidit." *Lelandi Collectanea.*

(4) "Werburcham sanctimoniam præfecit patruus rex *Etheldredus* quibusdam virginum monasteriis,—scil: apud *Trickingham*, *Wednam*, et *Hamburgam*, sed apud primam obiit, apud tertiam, ut ipsa vivens jussérat, sepulta est; ubi usque adventum *Danorum* incorrupta jacuit. *Higden.*

after

Goscelinus
in vita Sanctæ
Werburchæ.

Sax. Chron.
sub anno 782.

Higden.

after the Death of *Wulphere*, she and her Mother *Erminilda* were veiled by St. *Etheldreda*, Abbess of *Ely*. (1) Her Uncle, King *Etheldred*, who succeeded his Brother *Wulphere*, admiring his Neice's eminent Piety, and being much dissatisfied that his Kingdom should be deprived of such a Pattern of Religion and Virtue, made the most pressing Applications to her, to quit *Ely*, and return to her native Country: She was at length prevailed upon to come back into *Mercia*, and to accept the Superintendency of several religious Virgin-Societies, viz. the Monasteries of *Trickingham* (now *Trenttham*) in *Staffordshire*; *Weedon*, in *Northamptonshire*; and *Hanbury*, in *Staffordshire*. At the first of these Places she died, and (according to her Desire, (when living) was buried at the last, where her Body remained entire and incorrupt for almost one hundred Years.

Malmesbury (*de gestis regum*, L. i. Ch. 4.) says, that she died and was buried at *Chester*; but *Higden* tells us, that her Remains were deposited at *Hanbury* (near *Tutbury*) in *Staffordshire*, and (2) that in the Year 875, when the *Danes* had ravaged a great Part of *Mercia*, and were advanced as far as (3) *Repton* in *Derbyshire*, the People of *Hanbury*, terrified with their Devastations; took up the Corps of St. *Werburch*,

(1) "Decreverat Werburgha vivens, ut sepeliretur in Hehamburgensi monasterio. — ex libello de genealogia, et vita S. Etheldrede.
(2) "Dani venerunt apud Rependonium ubi hyemarunt, Hamburgenses indigenæ, qui 5 circiter milliaribus a Rependonio distant, pavore soluti, corpus Sanctæ Werburghæ, diu ibidem reconditum, et

"semper usque hunc incorruptum, cum se retro corpus beatæ virginis continente, ad Legecestriam (quæ nunc Cestria dicitur) tanquam ad locum tutissimum contra stragem barbaricam transtulerunt." *Ibid. ad Ann. 875.*

(3) Erroneously call'd *Rippon* by Mr. *Guthrie*, Vol. I. p. 212.

which

which they found fresh and entire, and carried it in a Hearse to *Chester*, as a Place of Safety, from the Havock and Barbarities of the *Danes*.

We do not find from any of the old Writers, about what Time her Shrine was erected, but shall endeavour to give some Account of Those, whose Statues are carved upon it.

CRIEDA. This Prince was derived, by (1) about ten Descents from *Woden*, the famous Stem and Origin of the *Saxons*, and indeed the common Father of the northern Nations. He came into *Britain*, A. D. 584, and founded the Sovereignty of *Mercia*, which by the Conquests, and Acquisitions of his Successors, became afterwards the most powerful Kingdom of the *Saxon Heptarchy*; having for its Boundaries, *Humber* on the North, the *Severn* on the West, the *Thames* on the South, and on the East the Kingdoms of *Essex* and of the *East-Angles*. It consisted of *Cheshire*, *Derbysire*, *Nottinghamshire*, *Staffordshire*, *Shropshire*, *Northamptonshire*, *Leicestershire*, *Lincolnshire*, *Huntingdonshire*, *Rutlandshire*, *Warwickshire*, *Worcestershire*, *Oxfordshire*, *Glostershire*, *Buckinghamshire*, *Bedfordshire*, Part of *Herefordshire*, and a small Portion of *Somersetshire*. Historians have not informed us how *Crieda* first got Possession of this Kingdom, nor have they transmitted any thing more concerning him. He died A. D. 593.

FIGURE I.

Sax. Chron.

Hen. of Huntingdon.

Florence of Worcester.

Sax. Chron.

(1) "Crieda fuit filius Cynewoldi, Cynewoldus Cnebba, Cnebba Iceni, Icelus Eomari, Eomarus Angelthcowi, Angel-

"theowus Offa, Offa Warmundi, Warmundus Wihlægi, Wihlægus Wodeni.—Sax. Chron. in *Pendæ genealogia*, ad. ann. 626.

FIG. 2. **PENDA**, surnamed *The Strong*. He was the Grandson of *Crieda*, and did not come to the Throne 'till he was Fifty Years of Age. He was of a bold, restless, and enterprising Spirit, ever invading and ravaging the Territories of the neighbouring Princes. Having marched against *Oswald*, King of the *Northumbers*, they came to a Battle at a Place called (1) *Maserfelth*, where *Oswald* was slain on the fifth of *August*, A. D. 642. By this Victory *Penda* made himself Master of those Parts of the *Northumbrian* Dominions which lay on the South Side of the *Humber*. He then laid Siege to *Bamborough*, which had been built (2) and strongly fortified by *Ida*, the first King of the *Northumbers*: *Penda* endeavoured to reduce it by Fire, but was baffled, and retreated.

Sax. Chron.
sub anno 626.

Bede, l. iii.
ch. 9.

As his whole Reign was a continued Warfare, he had, at different Times killed in Battle, five Christian Kings; and though he would never be converted, yet he permitted his Son *Peada* to be baptized, and to receive Preachers and Missiona-

Ib. l. iii. c. 18.

(1) Historians differ as to the Situation of *Bede's Maserfelth*. *Camden*, and from him, *Rapin*, *Carte* and *Guthrie*, will have it to be *Oswaldstreet*, or *Oswestry*, Com. Salop. *Powell*, in his Description of *Wales*, says, that it was in the *Northumbrian* Territories, and not at *Oswaldstrey*, which was call'd, by the Britons, *Macfusalwalht*, not *Maserfelth*. In *Lancashire* there is a large Fee, called *Mackerfield*, in which lies Part of *Wimwick* Parish, where, and especially in the Town of *Newton*, within that District, is a Tradition, that King *Oswald* had a Palace or Castle thereabouts, where he mostly resided, and this *Mackerfield* was within the *Northum-*

brian Dominion, which *Shropshire* was not. On the South-outside Wall of *Wimwick* Church are carved, in the old *English* Character, some Verses relating to this Prince:

*Hic locus, Oswalde, quondam placuit tibi walde
Nortanbunbrorum fueras Rex, nunc q polorum
Regna tenes, &c. &c. &c.*

(2) " *Ida regnum capeffit, unde Northan-*
" *hymbrorum regalis profapia primum ori-*
" *unda est; is construxit Bebbanburh, quod*
" *primum septo fuit munitum, ac postea*
" *muro. Sax. Chron. sub. ann. 547.*

(2) Mr. *Guthrie*, in several Passages, mistakes *Banbury* for this Place.

ries into his Territories. (1) *Bede* tells us, that *Penda* was wont to express a great Abhorrence of those outside Christians, who did not practise what they professed; declaring those to be contemptible Wretches, who did not serve that God in whom they believed.

Penda's chief Pleasure was in harrassing the *Northumbrians*; and having engaged in a War with King *Oswy*, Brother, and Successor to *Oswald*, they fought a bloody Battle on the fifteenth of *November*, A. D. 655, upon (2) the Banks of the River *Winuæd* (now *Aire*) near *Leeds* in *Yorkshire*, where the *Mercians* were totally routed, and (3) *Penda*, together with thirty Chieftains of royal Extraction, killed upon the Spot: He was slain in the eightieth Year of his Age, having reigned thirty Years.

Bede, l. iii.
c. 24.

Wulphere, the second Son of *Penda*. He succeeded his elder Brother *Pæda*, who was poisoned by his Wife, a *Northumbrian* Princess, in the third Year of his Reign.

FIG. 3.

Leland. Coll.
vol. I. p. 211.

Wulphere, during his Infancy, had been concealed, preserved, and afterwards set upon the Throne of *Mercia*, by the Care and Affection of three Nobleman: Soon after his Accession, he renounced Paganism, was baptized, and caused his Children to be educated in the Christian Religion.

(1) "Penda rex odio habebat, et despiciebat eos, quos fide Christi imbutos, opera fidei non habere deprehendit, dicens contemnendos esse eos et miseros, qui Deo suo in quem crederent obedire contemnerent." *l. iii. ch. 21.*

(2) The Place was afterwards called *Winwidfeld*, or the *Field of Victory*.

(3) Hoc anno, Penda periit in Winwidfelda, et xxx^e prole Regia cum eo. *Sax. Chron. sub ann. 655.*

He

Sax. Chron.
A. D. 661.

Bede, l. iv.
ch. 13.
Florence of
Worcester.
Brompton, p.
772.

He was an active Prince, much embroiled with his neighbouring Potentates, and waged War with various Success. He was attacked by *Kentwalch*, King of the *West-Saxons*, but had the good Fortune to defeat the Invaders; and so far improved his Victory, that he subdued *Buckinghamshire*, and the adjoining Parts of *Oxfordshire*, as far as the *Thames*; and afterwards conquered a Part of *Surrey*, *Hampshire*, and the *Ile of Wight*. Having fought and vanquished *Aethwalch*, King of the *South-Saxons*, he brought him Prisoner into *Mercia*, where he was converted to Christianity; upon which *Wulphere* restored him to his Liberty, (1) and gave him the *Ile of Wight*, and a large District in *Hampshire*.

Malmesbury charges *Wulphere* with simonically selling the Bishoprick of *London* to one *Wyna*, which, if true, serves to evince that he had got an absolute Sway in the Kingdom of *Essex*.

Sax. Chron.
sub ann. 675.

In the seventeenth and last Year of his Reign, he fought a bloody Battle with *Egwin*, King of the *West-Saxons*, at (2) *Bedanheof*, where a terrible Slaughter was made: *Henry* of *Huntingdon* says, that if there was any Advantage gained in this Battle, it might be claimed by the *Mercian*, who died not long afterwards.

Wulphere married *Erminilda*, Princess of *Kent*: (3) Their chief Residence was near *Stone* in *Staffordshire*; and by her he had Issue a Daughter, *Werburcha*, and three Sons, two of

(1) "Duas illi provincias donavit Vectam
videlicet insulam, et Meanvarorum pro-
vinciam." *Bede*, l. iv. Ch. 13.

(2) Supposed by some, to be *Bedwin* in

Wiltshire; by others, *Bidenham* near *Bedford*.

(3) *Wulferus* et *Erminilda* habitaverunt non
longè a *Stone* opp. *Stafordensis* Provincie.
Ex 1mo libro *Hen. Bradshaw* Monachi *Cestriens*.

which died before him, (some Writers say, killed by him) but the third, *Kenred*, came afterwards to be King of *Mercia*.

CEOLRED, Nephew of *Wulphere*, Cousin-German, and FIG. 4.
(according to the (1) *Saxon Chronicle*) Husband to (1) St. *Werburcha*, whose Brother *Kenred* resigned to him the Kingdom of *Mercia*.

In the Year 715, he fought a memorable Battle with *Ina*, Sax. Chron.
King of the *West-Saxons*, at *Wodensburgh* in *Wiltshire*; but the Occasions of this War are not related by any Historian. *Henry of Huntingdon* tells us, that it was a bloody Engagement, and so fatal to both Sides, that it was hard to say which had suffered most. Little else is recorded of this Prince: He was reputed to be of an active, warlike Disposition, and had a great Character. He died in the ninth Year of his Reign, Ibid.
A. D. 716, and was interred at *Litchfield*.

OFFA, A Prince of the ancient Lineage of *Woden*, and of FIG. 6.
the Royal House of *Mercia*, being descended from *Eawa* (or *Eapa*) Brother of King *Penda* Grandfather to St. *Werburcha*. Sax. Chron. sub anno 756. Florence of Worcester, p. 274.
Offa was called to the Throne of *Mercia* by the unanimous Voice of the People, harrassed out by the tyrannical Oppressions of the Usurper *Beorned*. He began to reign A. D. 756, and Sax. Chron.
was accounted one of the greatest among the *Mercian* Monarchs. His first Exploit, after his Accession to the Throne of his Ancestors, was an Expedition against the People of *Kent*, whom

(*) *Werburcha*, *Ceolredi regina*, sub anno 782.

he invaded with a powerful Force, and, after an obstinate Engagement, routed their Army, and with his own Hand, killed their King *Alric*. This Battle was fought at *Oxford* upon the

Sax. Chron. *Darent*, A. D. 774.

In the Year following, he attacked the *West-Saxons*, and defeated their King *Kenwulph*, at *Bensington* (or *Benson*) in *Oxfordshire*, adjoining to *Berkshire*, and forced him to a Cession of all that Territory on the North of the *Thames*, which, from that Time, became a Part of the Kingdom of *Mercia*. He soon afterwards subdued *Glocestershire*, and a Part of *Somersetshire*, and founded the Abbey of *Bath*: And next, to shew his great Power, attempted to remove the Archiepiscopal See from *Canterbury*, and to fix it at *Litchfield*.

Ibid, sub ann. 775.

Huntingdon, p. 343.

Anglia Sacra, vol. I. p. 568.

About this Time, the *Welsh* taking the Opportunity of his Wars with the *Saxons*, invaded *Mercia* with Fire and Sword, and ravaged the Country in a dreadful manner: Upon which *Offa* thought it prudent to come to a Truce with his other Adversaries, and turning his Arms against the *Welsh*, drove them from their new Conquests, and forced them to quit to him all the plain Country between *Severn* and *Wye*, which he peopled with *Saxons*; and as a Boundary and Barrier against future Invasions, he threw up that prodigious Trench from the Mouth of the River *Dee*, to that of the *Wye*, extending about ninety Miles, and since called *Offa's Dyke*. " This *Foss*, says the " Right Reverend Editor of *Camden*, may be seen on *Brachy-* " *Hill*, and near *Rhyd*, or *Helig*, and *Lanterden* in *Hereford-* " *shire*; and is continued northwards from *Knighon*, over a " Part of *Shropshire*, into *Montgomeryshire*; and may be traced " over

" over the long Mountain, called in *Welsh*, *Kevn Digolb*, to
 " *Harden-Castle*, cross the *Severn* and *Llan-Drinio Common*;
 " from whence it passes *Vyrnwy* again into *Shropshire*, not far
 " from *Oswaldstry* where there is also a small Village, called
 " *Trevyrclawdh*. In *Denbighshire*, it is visible along the Road
 " between *Rhyabbon* and *Wrexham*; from whence being con-
 " tinued thorough *Flintshire*, it ends a little below *Holy-well*,
 " where that Water falls into the *Dee*, at a Place formerly
 " the Site of *Basingwark*." (*)

The Reputation of this Prince was raised to such a Height,
 that *Charles the Great*, (commonly called *Charlemaine*) the
 most powerful and accomplish'd Monarch of that Age, sought
 his Friendship, sending him rich Presents; and, upon his Ac-
 count, granting considerable Immunities to *English* Travellers.

But *Charles* had, soon afterwards, good Reason to alter his
 Opinion of *Offa's* Character, which became deeply stained by an
 Act of most perfidious Cruelty. *Offa* was, by a solemn Treaty,
 to give his Daughter *Althrida* in Marriage to *Ethelbert*, King
 of the *East-Angles*; and accordingly that Prince came, by In-

Giraldus
Cambrens.

(*) It has been mentioned by some Wri-
 ters, that when *Offa* had finished his Dyke,
 he promulg'd a Decree, That if any *Welsh-
 man* should pass over this Boundary, he
 should be punished with the Loss of his
 Right Hand.

This is hinted at, in a Poem published by
 a young Nobleman of *Oxford*, about eighty
 Years ago.

" *Tu poteris Olim Cambros inhibere feroces,*
 " *Quos interclusit multo stracta aggere fossa,*

" *Et pudor adscissæ, perrupto limite, dextræ.*"

which may be thus translated :

You could, great *Offa*, with deep Dykes
 enclose

Within their Bounds, your rugged *Cam-
 brian* Foes ;

Nor dar'd they range into the *Mercian*
 Lands,

Dreading the Doom of amputated
 Hands.

visitation,

vation, into *Mercia*, where (1) *Offa*, by the Instigation of his Wife, in order to get the Kingdom of the *East-Angles*, basely broke thro' all Faith and Hospitality, and caused his royal unsuspecting Guest to be assassinated (2) by one *Grimbert*, in his Court at *Sutton-Wallis* in *Herefordshire*, upon the first Day of *May*, A. D. 792. The Body of (3) the murdered King was, by *Offa's* Orders, buried at *Marden*, not far from *Hereford*, upon the Banks of the River *Lug*; but was afterwards removed from thence, and deposited in *Hereford*, where the Cathedral is since built, and dedicated to his Memory.

Sax. Chron.

Speed.

The Princes of those Times could atone for Crimes of the blackest Dye, by Pilgrimages, and Donations to Religious Uses.

Offa, in order to obtain Quiet for his Conscience, set out for *Rome*, and, whilst there, granted to the *Pope*, and his Successors, that Tribute, which has been since called *Peter-pence*.

Having received his Holiness' Absolution, he returned to *England*, and built and endowed the Abbey of *St. Albans*, which he just lived to finish. Having reigned thirty-nine Years, he died about the End of *July*, or the Beginning of *August*, A. D. 794.

Florence of
Worcester.
Sax. Chron.

FIG. 7.

EGFERTUS, (or EGFRIDUS) Son and Successor to *Offa*, a Prince of great Hopes, but soon snatched away, having reigned only one hundred and forty-one Days: He was interred in the Monastery at *St. Albans*.

Sax. Chron.
Florence of
Worcester, p.
281.

(1) Uxor Offæ maritum consilio impellit, ut hospitem, et futurum generum è medio tollat. *Leland. Collect. v. I. p. 213.*

(2) Ethelbrihtus rex a Guimberto famulo Offæ olim ejus in Estanglia familiari amico

occiditur. *Ibid.*

(3) Offa jussit Ethelbrihti corpus cum capite in ripa Lugi fluv. in comit. Herefordiz recte sepeliri, id quod factum est. *Ibid.*

St. KENELM.

St. KENELM. This Infant King was the Son of *Kenulf*, FIG. 9.
 (1) a Prince of the *Mercian* Blood-Royal, who succeeded *Eg-*
fert, just before mentioned. *Kenelm* was but seven Years old
 at the Death of his Father, and his own Accession to the Crown:
 He had reigned only a few Months, when his Sister *Quendrida*
 plotted against his Life, (2) and procured his Tutor, (one
Ascobert) to murder him; who decoying the innocent Youth
 into an unfrequented Wood, cut off his Head, and buried him
 under a Thorn-Tree. The Author of *Polychronicon* says, that
 the Corps was thrown into a Well. Several old Historians men-
 tion the Murder of this Prince, and the miraculous manner of
 its Discovery: Concerning the latter, *William of Malmesbury*
 and *Matthew of Westminster*, give the following legendary Ac-
 count, viz. " That after the Perpetration of this bloody Deed,
 " the inhuman Sister soon seized the Kingdom, and prohibited
 " all Enquiry after her lost Brother: But this horrible Fact,
 " concealed in *England*, was made known at *Rome*, by a su-
 " pernatural Revelation; for on the Altar of *St. Peter* there,
 " a White Dove let fall a Paper, on which, in golden Letters,
 " was inscribed both the Death of *Kenelm*, and the Place of
 " his Burial; viz.—In (3) *Clent Cow-batch*, *Kenelme* King bearne,
 " lieth under a Thorne, heaved, bereaved."

Higden.

(1) Trinepos Wibbe patris Pendæ. *Mat. of Westminster*, p. 221.

(2) Kenelmus occisus ab Askeberto ejus nutritio et procuratore consilio Quendridæ in valle de Clent. *Leland. Collect.* v. i. p. 212.

(3) Clent ex vacca alba, indice sepulchri: Kenelmi, Cowdale vulgo appellata.

" In Clent sub spina jacet in convalle bovina,
 " Vertice truncatus Kenelmus roge creatus.

Tyrrel thus renders into our *English* this *Saxon* Inscription :

“ In (*) *Clent* *Cow-pasture*, under a *Thorn*,
“ Of *Head bereft*, lies *Kenelm*, *King born*.”

“ The *Roman* *Priests* and *Monks* could not understand the
“ Characters, but an *Englishman*, being accidentally present,
“ read the *Inscription*, and translated it into *Latin*; whereupon
“ the *Pope* sent over an *Envoy* to the *English* *Kings*, to in-
“ form them concerning the murdered *Kenelm*. The *Affair*
“ being thus miraculously revealed, the *Body* was taken out
“ of the *Hole* where it had been hid, and with great *Solemnity*
“ carried to *Winchelcombe* in *Glocestershire*, and there interred
“ in the *Church* of that *Abbey*, which his *Father* had founded;
“ soon afterwards *Pilgrimages* were made to his *Tomb*, and
“ *Camden* says, that it is scarcely credible in what great *Re-*
“ pute *Winchelcombe* *Monastery* was in, on account of this *Royal*
“ *Saint*.”

Malmesbury.
Higden.
Sax. Chron.
sub anno 819,

The unnatural Sister did not long enjoy the Fruit of her
ambitious Cruelty ; for she was outed from the Throne by her
Uncle *Geolwulf*, in a few Months after her Brother was killed.

FIG. 10. St. MILBURGA, Daughter of *Merwaldus*, the fourth Son
of King *Penda*, a near Kinswoman to St. *Werburcha*.

Vide Mercian
Genealogy.

(*) *Clent* is situated on the utmost South | Spring called St. *Kenelm's Well*, to which
Borders of *Staffordshire* adjoining to *Wor-* | extraordinary Virtues have been attributed.
cestershire: Near to this Place is a famous

BEORNA.

BEORNA. This Name, as upon the Scroll, or Label, is not in the Catalogue of the Sovereigns of *Mercia*, tho' we meet with it among the Kings of the *East-Angles*, over whom one *Beorna* reigned, and lived in the Time of *St. Werburgh*.

FIG. 11.

COLWLPHUS (commonly wrote **GEOLWULF**) was Brother of King *Kenulf*, and Uncle to the assassinated *Kenelm*. He drove his barbarous Niece *Quendrida*, from the *Mercian* Throne, and began to reign A. D. 820, but in his second Year, he himself was defeated, and forced out of his Territories, by an Usurper, named *Beornwulph*. He left only one Daughter, called *Kenedritha*.

FIG. 12.

Sax. Chron.

Spelman's
Councils, p.
333.

SANCTA ERMINILDA. From the three only remaining Letters of the Name upon this Label, we may reasonably conjecture, that this female Saint was intended to represent *Erminilda*, Mother of *St. Werburgh*, and Daughter of *Ercombert*, King of *Kent*, by his Wife *Sexburga*, Princess of the *East-Angles*. *Ercombert* was a zealous Christian, destroyed Heathen Idols and demolished their Temples. He instituted the Observance of *Lent* in his Kingdom, and was (saith *Malmesbury*) "famous for his Piety towards God; and his Love to his Country." He married his Daughter (*) *Erminilda* to *Wulphere*, King of *Mercia*, by whom she had *Werburgha* and other Children.

FIG. 14.

Sax. Chron.
sub ann. 640.

(*) *Erminilda*, filia S. *Sexburgæ*, nupsit *Wulphero*, regi *Merciorum*, ex quo genuit *Werburgham*.—*Ex libello de gentalogia et vita S. Etheldredæ.*

After

After her Husband's Death, she, and her Daughter *Werburcha*, were veiled by her Aunt *Etheldreda*, Abbess of *Ely*; (1) and thence she went to *Shepye* (in *Kent*) of which, she was, by her Mother *Sexburga*, appointed Abbess. She afterwards succeeded her Aunt in the Abbey of *Ely*, (2) where she died, and was buried.—She is said to have founded the Priory of *Stone* in *Staffordshire*; but others attribute it to her Husband, King *Wulphere*.

FIG. 16. Rex -----us. This Statue has the Stile of King, yet holds a Crozier in one Hand, by which Tokens, corroborated by the remaining Syllable on the Label, it may be supposed to have been the Effigies of *Ethelredus*, Uncle to St. *Werburch*, and Successor to his Brother *Wulphere*, in the Kingdom of *Mercia*. Though he seems to have taken upon him the Government, as his Nephew *Kenred* was so very young at his Father's Death, yet he held the reins rather too long for a Regency.

Bede, L. iv.
ch. 12.
Sax. Chron.
A. D. 679.

Soon after his taking the Crown, (3) he ravaged the Kingdom of *Kent*, and destroyed most of the Churches, Monasteries, and Possessions belonging to the See of *Rochester*. He then entered into a War with *Egfrid*, King of the *Northumbers*, and conquered the much greater Part of *Lincolnshire*, which was confirmed to him by Treaty. The venerable Historian

(1) Mortuo Wulphero, Erminilda venit ad Shepege ubi, a Sexburga, matre Abbas facta est. Ex eodem.

(2) Obiit Erminilda, et sepulta est in Ely. Ex eodem.

(2) Sancta Erminilda apud Hely pausat. *Malmesbury*.

(3) Etheldredus rex Merc: Cantiam vastavit, unde Roucestria destructa. *Leland's Collect.* v. i. p. 212.

tells us, that he afterwards began to be religiously disposed, and to compensate for his Devastations in the Diocese of *Recheſter*, he erected a Bishoprick at *Worceſter*, and was a great Benefactor to the Abbey of *Peterborough*; and delivering up the Kingdom to the rightful Heir *Kenred*, he became Abbot of the Monastery of *Bardeney* in *Lincolnſhire*, where he died, and was buried.

Sir Peter Ley-
ceſter, p. 93.
Sax. Chron.
ſub ann. 675.

Bede, l. v. c.
ch. 19.

Sax. Chron.
A. D. 716.

Sta ----- RGA. By the Termination upon the Scroll, FIG. 17. and the Number of Letters required to fill up the Space, this Figure may be conjectured to have represented St. *Keneburga*, who was Siſter to King *Wulphere*, and Aunt to St. *Werburch*. She was married to *Adelwal*, Prince of the *Northumbers*, and was a conſiderable Benefactreſs to the Monastery of *Peterborough*: After the Death of her Husband ſhe took the Veil, and was much eſteemed for her eminent Piety. About three hundred Years after her Death, her Bones were dug up by *Ælſus*, Abbot of *Peterborough*, and buried in that Monastery.

Sax. Chron.
ſub ann. 675.

Sax. Chron.
ſub anno 963.

us. This Image holds in its Right Hand a Pastoral Staff, and may, from the Character and Diſpoſition of that Prince, not improbably, be ſuppoſed to repreſent *Kenredus*, Brother to St. *Werburch*, who is, more than once, mentioned under Fig. 16. His being a helpless Infant at his Father's Death, induced his Uncle *Ethelred* to aſſume the Government, as has been before taken Notice of. His Uncle's continuing on the Throne did not ſeem to affect him, who was allowed

FIG. 18.

to

to be much fitter for a Cloyster than for a Court. After he had reigned about five Years, he relinquished the Crown to his Cousin-German *Geolred*, before-mentioned, went to *Rome*, accepted of an Abbacy, but passed the Remainder of his Days in the Monastery of *St. Peter*, in that City.

Sax. Chron.
sub ann. 709.

FIG. 20.

BALDREDUS. No such Person occurs among the *Mercian* Princes, but we meet with one of that Name, who was the last of the Kings of *Kent*: For *Kenulf*, King of *Mercia*, having conquered that Kingdom (A. D. 794) appointed *Cuthred*, a *Mercian* Nobleman, to govern there, and upon his Decease, permitted his Son, *Baldred*, to succeed him, who having reigned near eighteen Years, was attacked and defeated by *Egbert*, reputed the first Monarch of *England*, who drove him out of his Territories, and he was never heard of afterwards. (*)

Sax. Chron.
sub ann. 805.

FIG. 21.

MERWALDUS, called **MERWALA**, in the *Saxon Annals*; which Chronicle agrees with *Malmesbury*, *Simeon of Durham*, and *Florence of Worcester*, that he was the fourth Son of King *Penda*; was Father of *St. Milburga*, *St. Mildreda*, and *St. Milguida*; and was Uncle to *St. Werburgha*: His elder Brother, *Ethelred*, as soon as he came to the Throne of *Mercia*, erected *Herefordshire* into a Sovereignty, and gave it to *Merwald*, who had married a Daughter of *Ermenred*, King of *Kent*, by whom he had the three Daughters before-mentioned, but no Male Issue.

Sax. Chron.
sub ann. 656.

(*) Tho' the Stile *Rex*, was not on the Label, yet the Figure had a Crown upon its Head.

WIGLAFF, commonly called WITLAFF, and by the *Saxon Chronicle*, WITHLAFF, was a great Chieftain, or Eolderman, among the *Mercians*; and by them (after the Royal Line was extinct) advanced to the sovereign Power. *Florence of Worcester* styles him (*) a Petty King in the western Part of *Mercia*. Two Years after his Promotion, the great *Saxon* Prince, *Egbert*, having reduced most of *Mercia*, marched an Army against *Wiglaff*, and drove him out of his Territory: The vanquished Prince fled to the Abbey of *Croyland*, and was concealed for three or four Months, in his Cousin *Etheldreda's* Cell; at length, by the Mediation of *Siward*, Abbot of that Monastery, he was restored to his Sovereignty, and permitted to enjoy it, subject to a Tribute. This King *Wiglaff* seems to have been related to *St. Werburgha*, as the Historians call him the Kinsman of *Etheldreda*, who was Aunt to *Erminilda*, the Mother of *Werburgha*.

FIG. 22.
Leland. Coll.
Malmesbury,
l. i. ch. 4.

Sax. Chron.
sub ann. 825.

Brompton, p.
776.

Ingulphus;

BERTWULPH. He was the Brother of *Wiglaff*, and began to reign A. D. 839, but was admitted to his Government, only as a tributary Prince under *Egbert* the *Saxon*: His Rule continued for about twelve or thirteen Years, when the *Danes*, in three hundred Ships, came up the *Thames*, and making a Descent, took *Canterbury* and *London*; and defeating *Bertwulph's* Army, drove him out of *Mercia*, and forced him to take Refuge abroad.

FIG. 23.
Leland. Coll.

Sax. Chron.
sub ann. 851.

(*) In occidentali plaga Merciorum regulus.

FIG. 24. **BURGHREDUS.** He was permitted to succeed *Bert-wulph*, upon the like tributary Tenure, A. D. 852. He is mentioned (by the Stile of *Rex*) to have been present, along with many other Princes, at the Endowment of (1) *Medeshamstede* Monastery. He (2) married *Ethelwida*, Daughter of *Ethelwulph*, or *Adalwulf*, the *Saxon* Monarch, who, upon an Application from his Son-in-law, and the *Mercian* Nobility, entered into an Alliance with him, to assist him in his Wars against the *Welfs*; and he accordingly marched a powerful Army through *Mercia*, and warred against the *Welfs* with so much Success, that he obliged them to come to *Burghred's* own Terms.

Sax. Chron.
sub. ann. 852.

Ibid, sub ann.
853.

After he had continued in the Government of *Mercia* twenty-two Years, he was over-powered, and defeated by the *Danes*; and being forced to fly beyond the Seas, he took Refuge at *Rome*, where he ended his Days in the *English* Seminary, and was buried in their Church, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin.

Ibid, sub ann.
874.

FIG. 26. **St^a -----EDA.** By the Remains on the defaced Label belonging to this Image, it may be conjectured, that it was intended for St. *Etheldreda*, who was Great-Aunt to St. *Wurburgha*, and veiled her and her Mother *Erminilda*, at her Abbey of *Ely*. This *Etheldreda* was Daughter of *Anna*, King of the *East-Angles*, (3) and Widow of *Tonbert*, a Prince in the south-

(1) Now *Peterborough*.

(2) Filia *Adelwulfi* regis *West-Sax.* nupit *Burghredo* regi *Merciorum.* *Hoveden.*

(3) *Tondbercto* defuncto, data est Regi

Ecgrido, cujus consortio cum duodecim annis uteretur, perpetua tamen mansit virginis tatis integritate gloriosa. *Bede*, I. iv. ch. 12.

ern (1) Parts of *Northumberland*, and afterwards married to *Egfrid*, King of the *Northumbers*, with whom she lived twelve Years, yet still preserv'd her Virginity. She took the Veil from *St. Ebba*, Abbess of *Coldingham*, and soon after became (2) Abbess of *Ely*, where she died, and was buried A. D. 679.

A. D. 671.
Bede.
Sax. Chron.
sub. annis
673 & 679.

ETHELBERTUS. There was no *Mercian* King of this Name, but several in other Kingdoms during the Heptarchy: Among these was *Ethelbert*, King of *Kent*, who was one of the most celebrated Princes of his Time, and the first Christian King of his Nation. Having founded several Sees, he died in the fifty-sixth Year of his Reign.

Sax. Chron.
sub annis 560,
604, 616.

Ethelbert was Great Great-Grandfather to *S. Werburgh*; his Grandson *Ercombert*'s Daughter, *Erminilda*, being her Mother.

S^{ta} MIEDRIDA. This Princess is taken Notice of, under *Fig. 21*, as Daughter of *Merwaldus*, and Cousin-German to *St. Werburgh*: Little or nothing else concerning her, is mentioned by any of our Historians.

FIG. 30.

We have now gone thorough with the proposed Historical Sketches relating to each of these Images, whose represented Original could be ascertained by its Label; and have supplied some of the defaced Ones with such Conjectures, as (it is hoped) will not be deemed irrational or improbable.

(1) Tunbertus, Australium Girviorum princeps, primus S. Etheldridæ maritus. Egfridus autem rex Northumbr. secundus

erat. *Leland. Collect. v. i. p. 212.*
(2) Ipsa facta est Abbatisa in regione quæ vocatur Elge. *Bede, ut antea.*

See p. 21, &
22.

The Memoirs of the *Mercian* Saints might have been a good deal enlarged ; but the *Legendary* and *Miraculous* have been studiously avoided ; and of these Sort of Anecdotes, but a single Specimen is given, *viz.* in the Account of that young Saint, the murder'd *Kenelm*.

There would likewise have been a more ample Mention of our Virgin Patroness, St. *Werburch*, but that only a Summary, not a History, is intended : Yet in the preceding Pages some of her Excellencies will appear, as well as her Royal Lineage and High Extraction ; she being descended from, and allied to, not only the *Mercian* Monarchs, but also the Kings of *Kent*, those of the *East-Angles*, and other Potentates of the *Saxon* Heptarchy : And the liberal Benefactions of the renowned (1) *Etheldred* and *Ethelfleda* ; the Charter of King (2) *Edgar* ; the Munificence of (3) *Leofric* and his Lady *Godiva* ; and the noble Endowments of (4) our famous *Hugh Lupus*, his Countess *Ermentrude*, and his *Barons* ; together with the Confirmations

(1) These were Sovereigns of *Mercia*, about the Beginning of the Tenth Century : *Florence of Worcester* styles Him *Vir eximie probitatis*. She was the Daughter of King *Alfred*, and is celebrated in History. *Eldredus dux Merciorum, cui nupsit Elfseda. Alfredi West-Sax. regis Filia. Leland. Coll. v. i. p. 212.*

(2) The Donations of that Prince are, " Humili Familiae Deo omnipotenti in honorem Sanctissimae, semperque Virginis *Werburchae*, in loco quid dicitur *Leiacestria*, " assidue militanti." *Monastic. v. 1. p. 200.*

Some Parts of this old Charter, being perhaps, not very legible, might have occasioned Sir *William Dugdale's* *Anachronism* ;

for he makes the Date of it to be A. D. 858, which was just one hundred Years before *Edgar* began his Reign. This King was at *Chester* A. D. 972, and died A. D. 975, in the thirty-third Year of his Age.

(3) *Leofricus Comes reparavit Monasterium Werburghae Cestriae. Leland. Collectan. v. ii. p. 60.*

He was Earl of *Mercia*, circa A. D. 1018. *Godiva* was that most remarkable Benefactress to the City of *Coventry*, mentioned by several of our Historians.

(4) *Leofricus Comes templum in honorem Werburghae Virginis posuit, quod postea Hugo primus e Normannico genere Cestriae Comes restauravit. Camdeni Britan. p. 467.*

and

and additional Bounties of the succeeding Earls of *Chester*, will sufficiently evince the great Respect and Veneration which After-Ages had for the Memory of this devout and exemplary Princefs.

As the Shrine of this Saint, and its curious Decorations here treated of, have not been touched upon by any of our Writers, perhaps, even these hasty Collections may be of Service to some future Compiler, who may possibly undertake to give us the History and Antiquities of the Churches and City of *Chester*.

F I N I S



E 313

and additional Records of the preceding Kings of Castile, will
sufficiently evince the great Respect and Veneration which
Aragon had for the Memory of this brave and exemplary
Prince.

As the Shrine of this Saint and its curious Decorations
have not been touched upon by any of our
Writers, perhaps even these daily Collections may be of Ser-
vice to some future Compiler, who may possibly undertake to
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